

Message Text

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S E C R E T ATHENS 4719

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR GR

SUBJECT: HOMEPORING - CALOGERAS-STEARN'S MEETING

REF: ATHENS 4679

1. STEARN'S MET WITH CALOGERAS THIS NOON AND EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT IN FIRST MEETING OF HOMEPORING SUBGROUP (REFTEL) GREEK SIDE HAD BEEN UNWILLING TO DISCUSS CAREFULLY WORKED OUT PROPOSALS FOR CONTINUED US USE OF PIER FACILITY AT ELEFSIS. STEARN'S SAID THAT IT APPEARED THAT GREEK MEMBERS OF SUBGROUP HAD NOT BEEN AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS ANYTHING BUT TERMINATION OF US NAVY ACCESS TO ELEFSIS FACILITIES. IN STEARN'S VIEW, THIS WAS SHORT SIGHTED BECAUSE ONLY BY STUDYING US PROPOSALS COULD GREEK SIDE JUDGE THEIR ADVANTAGES AND WEIGH THESE AGAINST COSTS THAT WOULD SURELY ACCRUE TO GOG UNDER FORCE MAJEURE CONCEPT IF LEASE ON PIER WAS TERMINATED.

2. CALOGERAS SAID THAT POSSIBILITY OF JOINT USE OF ELEFSIS PIER

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BY US AND HELLENIC NAVIES HAD BEEN THOROUGHLY EXPLORED WITH GREEK

DEFENSE MINISTRY PRIOR TO OPENING OF SUBGROUP TALKS. "TOP LEVEL OF HELLENIC NAVY" HAD DECIDED THAT PIER WAS NOT NEEDED FOR GREEK SHIPS. IN OPINION OF CALOGERAS, POLITICAL OBJECTIONS TO HOMEPORTING PROGRAM APPLIED EQUALLY TO CONTINUED USE OF ELEFSIS PIER BY US NAVY. HE THEREFORE SAW NO CHANCE THAT US PROPOSALS WOULD BE ACCEPTED.

3. STEARNS SAID THAT ABANDONMENT OF FACILITIES AT ELEFSIS WOULD BE WASTEFUL AND UNNECESSARY. THEY COULD BE OF CONTINUING UTILITY TO THE SIXTH FLEET AND BY AGREEING TO US PROPOSAL GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD RELIEVE ITSELF OF COSTS OF OVER ONE AND HALF MILLION DOLLARS. FURTHERMORE, USE OF PIER BY THE SIXTH FLEET WAS A SUBJECT ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM HOMEPORTING ITSELF. US HAD AGREED TO TERMINATE THE HOME-PORTING PROGRAM. BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER 2,000 US NAVY PERSONNEL AND 1,000 DEPENDENTS WOULD HAVE LEFT GREECE. THIS WOULD OCCUR WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE ELEFSIS PIER.

4. AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSION, CALOGERAS AGREED TO INSTRUCT GREEK MEMBERS OF HOMEPORTING SUBGROUP TO EXPLORE US PROPOSALS MORE CAREFULLY AT NEXT MEETING. HE SAID HOWEVER THAT HE COULD HOLD OUT NO HOPE THAT FINAL DECISION OF GREEK GOVERNMENT AT POLITICAL LEVEL WOULD BE OTHER THAN NEGATIVE.

5. STEARNS SAID THAT AT THIS STAGE WE WANTED TO BE ABLE TO MAKE A DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE ADVANTAGES TO BOTH GREECE AND THE US OF CONTINUED USE OF ELEFSIS PIER BY THE SIXTH FLEET. DEPENDING ON THE GREEK REACTION WE MIGHT WISH TO RAISE THE MATTER OURSELVES AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL OF THE GREEK GOVERNMENT.
KUBISCH

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